

## MEETING SUMMARY

### **Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan (Plan) Wolf Plan Stakeholder Representative (WPSR) Work Group Process**

#### **WORK GROUP MEETING #5**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2019; 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM**

**MONARCH HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER, CLACKAMAS OR  
12566 SE 93RD AVE, CLACKAMAS, OR 97015**

#### **OVERVIEW**

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The Oregon Wolf Conservation Management Plan's (Plan) Wolf Plan Stakeholder Representative (WPSR) Work Group met in Clackamas, OR on Tuesday, January 8, 2019. Curt Melcher, Director, Shannon Hurn, ODFW Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife Programs, Doug Cottam, Wildlife Division Administrator, Kevin Blakely, Wildlife Division Deputy Administrator, and Derek Broman, Carnivore/Furbearer Program Coordinator represented ODFW leadership at the meeting. Amira Streeter, Natural Resources Policy Advisor represented the Governor's Office.

Attendance included four WPSR Work Group members representing stakeholders from throughout Oregon. Four WPSR Work Group members were not in attendance for the meeting after sending an email to WPSR work group and letter to the Governor's office indicating their intent to withdraw from the meeting (attached as part of this summary).

Over the course of the meeting, ODFW presented proposed language updates to the current Wolf Plan to WPSR Work Group members. WPSR Work Group members discussed and sought resolution on the following topics with each other, ODFW staff, and the Governor's Office and provided recommendations and changes to the language.

- Collaring Priorities
- Investigations
- Other Sources of Mortality
- Compensation
- Funding Needs
- Chronic Depredation
- Controlled Take
- Non-lethal Tools and Techniques
- Approach for the February 8, 2019 Commission Meeting

This report summarizes the major meeting discussions, action items, and next steps for the WPSR Work Group process.

## **1. Welcome, Introductions, Context, and Agenda**

*Curt Melcher, ODFW Director; Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West*

All members introduced themselves.

Curt Melcher, ODFW Director kicked off the meeting by welcoming members and recognizing that several stakeholder groups withdrew from the process. He noted there is value in the open letter they sent as it provides understanding on where the organizations stand on wolf-related issues. Curt announced that ODFW originally intended to present a recommendation on the updated Wolf Plan to the Commission in February but will be delaying the presentation of the proposal until the March 15, 2019 Commission meeting.

Shannon Hurn, ODFW Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife Programs, expressed appreciation for those attending the meeting today as ODFW seeks to receive feedback on updates to the Oregon Wolf Plan. Shannon expressed the intent of the meeting is to review the items discussed previously and to check in with the groups present. ODFW intends to have a draft out two weeks before they meet with the Commission on March 15.

Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West, echoed Curt and Shannon and thanked members for their participation. Deb asked for any updates related to the work proposed for discussion.

Members had questions about the briefings and presentations to the Commission. A member asked if they should expect updates on the Wolf Plan at the January or February Commission meetings. ODFW staff responded that they will provide an update in the Director's Report on the status of the process but will not have a formal presentation at the January or February meetings.

Deb reviewed the meeting agenda and the ground rules. She noted that ODFW will provide an overview of the process updates from the December 7 Commission briefing and then the team will review recommendations on the Wolf Plan updates. Then WPSR Work Group will discuss each topic, as well as an approach for heading towards the March Commission meeting and ensure all members are clear on that path forward.

## **2. Agency Updates: Funding and December 7 Commission Briefing**

*Derek Broman, ODFW Wildlife Division Carnivore/Furbearer Program Coordinator and Shannon Hurn, ODFW Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife Programs*

Derek Broman explained the December Commission meeting included an update on the Work Group process as part of the Director's Report, including reflection on the facilitation process from Deb. The Commission wanted to know if ODFW was seeing progress and was on track. The Commission benefitted from hearing directly from Deb Nudelman as a neutral facilitator. The next week, ODFW gave an update to the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee on wolves and there were questions on the Wolf Plan process.

Shannon Hurn provided an update on the Wolf Plan Implementation Policy Option Package (POP) request. She noted that in past meetings, stakeholders agreed that it would be beneficial to have more resources toward collaring, more staff serving as biologists, and ODFW staff assisting landowners with non-lethal methods. ODFW put in a POP for funding to support these activities,

and it was approved as part of the Governor's recommended budget in December. She reviewed the POP in the handout materials.

A member noted that in the open letter recently received, conservation groups had proposed using 50% of the funding for compensation and asked whether this would mean less funding to support the work outlined in the POP. Shannon said that ODFW would like to see more funding for the compensation program but would prefer that it come from a source other than the POP. All questions for funding is ultimately still under consideration by the legislature.

### **3. Review the WPSR Work Group Outcomes as part of Wolf Plan Update**

*Kevin Blakely, Wildlife Division Deputy Administrator and Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West*

Kevin directed members to the meeting documents that outline recommendations for incorporating the primary topics from WPSR Work Group process into the Oregon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.

#### **Incorporation of Initial Topics**

Kevin explained that the handout reviews what is in the current Plan, and recommendations for how the topics are proposed for update in the 2019 Wolf Plan. The recommendations include:

##### **1. Collaring Priorities:**

ODFW presented the following update to The Plan:

- In the past, ODFW was required to place a collar on a wolf in every pack. This requirement was an exceedingly difficult bar for ODFW to meet. Collaring efforts are sometimes unsuccessful and practice has shown that it is more efficient to have flexibility and use collars where the data would be most effective. The proposal in Phase 1 and 2 proposes a language change stating "efforts will be made to collar at least one member of each pack" but again does not make a formal requirement. In Phase 3, the proposal recommends using collaring in Phase 3 areas but would not expect all packs to have collared wolves. The POP includes funding for radio collars, which can help achieve these collaring goals. The handout highlights proposed language regarding radio collaring. ODFW would continue to utilize GPS and VHF collars and would use VHF collars in situations where it would provide the most benefit recognizing the balance of obtaining consistent locational data and cost savings.

Members asked questions and discussed the proposed update to the Plan:

- A member expressed concern with language in Phase 3 and asks to use a more proactive word than "may" in the second to last sentence of the paragraph to express a greater level of commitment. ODFW agreed with changing the word as it captures their overall position.
- A member recommended using tables to more clearly indicate where and when collars would be used and mentioned the proposal makes no mention to the development of wolf management zones. Some members would like to see language around using collaring to support population management and zone development and to have the language in a table or flow chart to illustrate when collaring would be

used, and how we are preparing for a time with increased wolf populations. ODFW agreed that the collaring data is a component of population modeling which will be used as a building block to support management.

- Some participants would like for the Plan to think ahead about where we want to end up in the future. There was an ask to put forethought into zoning and population and pathways to address those topics after the five-year period. ODFW demonstrated they are thinking ahead but currently, there isn't the data to build specifics into the Plan. ODFW is working to collect that data to inform future decision making and planning.
- A member stated the need to be careful about the data collected. There is a need to collect information about what we think we might need but don't want to collect data that is not relevant or neglect to collect data that is needed. ODFW agreed and stated they are constantly working to develop the information and foundation to track and monitor wolf behavior. ODFW as a department focuses on data collection and has explicit reasons to collect specific data. If ODFW had more staff, that would translate into more data collected and more collars administered. ODFW agrees and are working to collect data to make better decisions moving forward.
- A member stated they will work to push for those resources and funding to make data collection and additional collaring possible. It is important to members and is one of the biggest asks through this Plan. As the population grows, this is a critical funding investment. The member appreciated the priorities for collaring and think they are correct but wishes there was more mandated collaring but understand that depends on resources.
- A member recommended tying science into the language and suggested that ODFW highlight their efforts to look at science in drafting the recommendations.

## 2. **Investigations:**

Kevin indicated ODFW intends to work with agencies to complete an update to the Federal/State Coordination Strategy between USFW, WS and ODFW, which has not been updated since March 2011 (current Plan contained the April 2007 Coordination Strategy).

Kevin directed members to the handout that shows the following recommended changes to the current Wolf Plan:

- Depredation investigations will continue on the landscape.
- Wildlife Services will continue to be involved in conducting investigations, under the same protocols and training as ODFW investigators.
- Investigations will continue to play a key role in decision-making in the compensation program, overseen by ODA and the County Coordinating Committees.

Members asked questions and discussed the proposed changes:

- A member asked how often investigation decisions are made by biologists on the ground verses having to go back to Salem. ODFW staff replied that the Salem office acts as a resource to investigators but never makes the determination on whether a wolf depredation occurred. The decision is made on a case by case basis on the ground after the evidence-based investigation. The District team, Wolf Program field

staff along with regional manager makes the decision. Members thanked staff for the clarification and noted that there has been a misconception that these kinds of decisions are made by the Salem office.

- Members asked what ODFW is doing to engage the public on how investigations work, in order to avoid misconceptions. ODFW responded that they post all investigations online to educate producers, local citizens, advocacy groups and to remain transparent. ODFW also notes it can be difficult to come to a conclusion with minimal evidence on the site. It can be difficult to get a depredation confirmed and that is part of where the misconceptions start. When ODFW introduces new non-lethals to producers, they also educate producers on reporting a death and how to recognize signs of what predator might have made a kill. The speed of investigations also depends on how experienced the investigator is; it is a steep learning curve. Their focus on educating producers on recognizing signs will make for greater efficiencies to address any potential wolf-livestock conflicts.
- A member noted there is a lack of reporting by producers; less than 50% of producers report depredations. Some producers have business and political reasons for not reporting.
- A member asked whether local law enforcement can be trained to conduct investigations and whether that was being considered by ODFW. ODFW responded that law enforcement would need to be trained on protocol and practices. Those doing investigations are trained individuals and ODFW cannot require sheriff's offices to get trained. There is no prohibition against law enforcement conducting investigations, except in some Phase 1 and 2 areas. There are concerns about how to implement a program to train sheriffs as investigators. ODFW rely on trained, local investigators who are very skilled biologically and very familiar with wolf kills. The success of an investigation depends largely on how quickly after the livestock death the investigation can be conducted, analogous to a crime scene investigation.
- A member mentioned the need for continued coordination between local field staff and producers regarding wolf movements as there is currently not as much direct communication with ODFW to livestock producers as there used to be. It would be useful to have enhanced movement of information to livestock producers.
  - ODFW responded that in the past, the agency texted producers about wolves in the area but this was not effective because if producers did not receive a text, they tended to let their guard down. In certain counties, landowners should expect that there could be wolves around at any time.
  - ODFW also noted oftentimes, the information from collared wolves to pass on is instantly outdated. Collaring does not produce lots of real-time data. Instead, it shows the dots on the map for the past few weeks.

### 3. **Other sources of morality:**

ODFW presented the following proposed update to the Plan:

- ODFW proposed new sections in the Wolf Plan on potential conservation threats, Strategies for Addressing Wolf Population Decline, and Potential for Future State Relisting. ODFW incorporated literature and ideas proposed by conservation stakeholders. The handout includes a link to those sections.

#### 4. **Compensation:**

ODFW presented the following proposed update to the Plan:

- ODFW plays an important role in the compensation process and will continue to have interactions with the ODA and County Compensation Committees in implementation of the program.
- The POP has a desired outcome to reduce the response time for effective non-lethals and investigations to improve information quality and overall implementation of the Plan.

*Derek Broman, ODFW Wildlife Division Carnivore/Furbearer Program Coordinator and Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West*

#### 5. **Chronic Depredation:**

ODFW presented the following proposed update to the Plan:

- Derek referenced the *Definition of Chronic Depredation* handout and reviewed the current definition of “chronic depredation.” Derek reviewed the various ODFW staff proposals on how to redefine the term. At the November 27, 2018 WPSR Work Group meeting, members said they would like to see a temporal element in the definition, and discussed options of a 6, 9, or 12-month time period, and including a grazing season as the time-period. Some wanted to see Phase 1 requirements extended into Phases 2 and 3. Members discussed number of confirmed depredations, ranging from two to four. ODFW attempted to develop a new proposal to bring to the WPSR, taking into account stakeholder feedback.
- ODFW proposes that for Phases 2 and 3, chronic depredation be defined as two confirmed depredations in a nine-month period; and the agency still reserves its ability to evaluate the situation and exercise discretion rather than mandating lethal control.
- At the last WPSR meeting, ODFW heard that wolves that depredated twice nearly always depredated a third time. ODFW took another look at the data and found that 76% of wolves that depredated twice did depredate a third time. But the data circumstances are not always comparable, leading to a lot of variance in the data. It is difficult to draw conclusions, so the figure should not be the primary foundation for using two depredations as the standard.
- Derek asked for feedback and noted that the recommendation is still up for discussion before being presented to the ODFW Commission.

Members asked questions and discussed the update:

- A member asked whether ODFW had looked at other Western States to understand how often a second depredation leads to a third. The data may be more conclusive if you look at a larger range.
  - ODFW clarified the specific findings from the Oregon data, and noted that data outside of Oregon does not lend itself easily to the discussion. Additionally, due to better effectiveness and awareness of non-lethal methods recently, the data would likely show fewer depredation in recent years.

- A member noted USFWS has annual reports and data that may be useful to look at. Research showed that in certain areas, even with total pack removal, there were still confirmed depredations.
- ODFW responded that they heard that people are interested in building models to predict what kind of landscape and weather features might explain why depredations are occurring in certain areas. This can be a proactive way to map and model areas of conflict, to help us know where to be on the ground to prevent conflicts.
- A member expressed support for the two depredations with a 9-month time period standard, noting it is acceptable because it allows the producer to react.
- A member reemphasized that sheep and cattle producers would not support increasing the depredation standard as the wolf population grows. The member supported the recommendation that ODFW retain the discretion extraordinary circumstances and would hesitate to raise the standard to three or four depredations.

Overall, members agreed that the proposed depredation standard (two depredations in a 9-month time period) is reasonable. They recognized that the four stakeholders not in the room were not supportive of this proposal at the previous WPSR Work Group meeting. Some members added that the current Wolf Plan has worked very well, and ODFW has done a great job managing with the old Plan. They noted the two-depredation standard has been around for a long time, is a more liberal standard and the plan has functioned with that standard. The use of the two depredations with including a more conservative time frame is well supported by the facts.

During the discussion, a member mentioned that while all members in the room accept the proposal of two depredations, the four stakeholders not present today were dissatisfied with the proposal and this is one of the major reasons for the absences today. The member expressed concern about moving forward when the groups absent today cannot speak to the proposal.

Deb responded noting the best we can do today is hear from those who are present. In a perfect world, the four missing groups would be here to explain their point of view and continue to try to seek common ground. We can, however, rely on what the groups have said in the past meetings and can do our best to make interpretations based on their letter.

Deb responded by noting that stakeholders have discussed these topics many times before the WPSR Work Group process started and have continued to talk about them through these meetings. It would have been beneficial for the NGO groups to be here in person to explain their point of view on the topics and proposal, however, they have expressed many comments on the topics in past meetings and through the open letter that can help us understand their interests. While we cannot make assumptions about what they would have said at today's meeting, we can take into account what they have been saying on the topics throughout the process.

#### 6. **Controlled Take:**

ODFW presented the following proposed update to the Plan:

- Derek referenced the *Controlled Take* handout and presented:

- In statute, wolves are defined as a special status game mammal. In the draft Plan update developed in November 2017, ODFW created a new chapter for the Plan titled “Special Status Game Mammal”.
- At past WPSR Work Group meetings, members discussed the idea of special permit agents, which was not supported by many WPSR Work Group members. ODFW proposes removing any reference to special permit agents.
- ODFW recommends incorporating concept from Federal ESA 10j language. USFWS has explicit but simple language around when wolves can be taken to benefit ungulate populations; the past version of the Wolf Plan did not reflect this language.
- The proposed special status game mammal language almost exactly mirrors what is in the Wolf Plan now and refines the language so it is in one location in the Plan.
- Derek asked for feedback, particularly on pages 2-3 of the handout, which are essentially proposed text for the updated Wolf Plan.

Members asked questions and discussed the update to the Plan:

- A member asked where the federal 10j language is housed in the proposed language. ODFW noted that the updated Plan is mirroring the 10j language as a tool in the toolbox as a means for ungulate management in Oregon. Section 2(b)(i) which says that “ODFW has determined that wolves are a major cause of the population not meeting...” is the Federal 10j language.
- A member asked how the term “major cause” is defined. ODFW responded they are required to put together a document looking at various factors to make the determination and then present this to the Commission along with a recommendation on what to do.
- A member asked what kind of hunting permit would require Commission authorization.
  - ODFW responded that any proposals for hunting needs to be approved in a separate rulemaking process by the Commission. There will be no general season hunting for wolves. Any controlled hunt permits for hunters would need to go through a Commission process. The Commission would expect a presentation on why ODFW is recommending a hunting program, and it would go through a public process.
  - Controlled take is a general term to indicate “we will regulate the take of wolves in some manner.” If hunters are used in any way to remove wolves, it must go through a Commission process. The Plan does not, by itself, authorize any hunting seasons.
- All members found the proposed language acceptable, with the following comments and rationales:
  - Appreciate that there is a required Commission process if hunting were to be considered, and wonder whether the conservation community understands that the Commission process is required before hunting could be authorized.
  - The language promotes a conservation ethic and supports adaptive wildlife management practices.

- Looking at 2025 when the Plan is likely to be revised again; the wording does not allow for a burgeoning population, such as occurred in Idaho. To adequately talk about controlled take, Oregon should consider a Phase IV, that includes zones and management objective numbers per zone. General hunting is likely to never occur, but the Plan needs some controlled hunt language to allow for effective management. The language is fine as is but is a compromise: since the best solution would be zones and management numbers to allow assurance for harvestable game mammals in the future. Another member added that management should be looked at more broadly, and incorporate all species (wolves, cougars, bears, deer and elk) rather than a species-by-species approach. ODFW responded understanding the concern but feel they are not ready for the detailed conversation around population thresholds. ODFW will need to learn more and get better decision tools before we can undertake that in the next several years.
- A member pointed to Section 6 stating the language shows that trappers need to go through an approval process, but hunters do not and asked if this is correct.
  - ODFW clarified that trappers are specifically licensed, whereas hunters are not. This section indicates that in the future it is possible that public trappers could be used for wolf management in addition to hunting. Recreational trappers have to go through a process to become approved. Trapping is by certification in Oregon. Hunter-education is not required after 18-years of age. The language is reflective of how things are currently done in Oregon.

**7. Funding Needs, Non-Lethal Tools and Techniques, and Non-Lethal Deterrence Plan Proposal:**

Shannon Hurn presented the topic:

- ODFW provided context and a reminder of the non-lethal deterrence plan proposal. WPSR Work Group members proposed the development of non-lethal plans on a ranch-specific basis. There was agreement that the plans would be useful for producers, but ODFW found it would not be feasible to write individual plans for all ranchers. ODFW looked at Cynthia Warnock's plan and the planning tool from Defenders of Wildlife, and developed a new template, so that ranchers could create individual plans. ODFW proposes that the agency would not meet individually with producers but could do more with educational workshops and bring non-lethal tools to people in a general way so they can incorporate them into their plans.
- If packs crop up in areas, ODFW is committed to learning about that pack and recommending non-lethal tools specific to that pack to landowners.
- ODFW included a proposal to hire two non-lethal deterrence plan coordinators to coordinate workshops, make resources available to landowners, and speak to them specifically about their plans. The information was requested by WPSR members to potentially use in separate discussions with legislators.

Members asked questions and discussed the topic:

- A member asked what is the recommendation to the Commission regarding non-lethal deterrence plans? ODFW responded that currently, when a property owner makes a lethal request, the property owner must show that they have used all appropriate non-lethal methods before the request is authorized. ODFW has heard

from landowners that it is very cumbersome to show that they have used those methods. Under the proposal, ODFW is saying that wolf deterrence plans are not required, but if a landowner has one in place, it is a sufficient demonstration of use of non-lethal methods and avoids the process of having to document everything the landowner has done regarding non-lethal methods.

- A member noted the proposal creates more work for producers and indicates landowners must do more to conserve wolves, while, there is no talk about compensation. Producers do not have the money to use non-lethals and seems like an unfair burden. At a management level, we should be looking at how to be less burdensome on producers. ODFW responded saying the deterrence plans are not required. There has been a proposal for hiring two more staff to help with the wolf deterrence plans, but landowners are not required to write the plans.
- ODFW staff stated as we talk about the Deterrence Plan Template and non-lethal methods, we need to consider how we message it and who does the messaging. Receiving a handout at an OCA meeting might not be the best way. Things like Facebook and YouTube videos help people learn. It shouldn't be just ODFW delivering the message. The member suggests using producers and others to help as well as creative ways to communicate with folks. They noted that Extension Agents are effective messengers and have credibility with producers.
- ODFW noted that they do not plan to advocate for use of non-lethal deterrence plans but offered to meet again as a group for anyone who wants to discuss the wolf deterrence plans and how we could use them going forward.
- Members noted that the deterrence plans would be more actively used by producers if they led to quicker action. If producers knew that creating a plan would lead to quicker action in the face of chronic depredations, more producers would likely make a plan.
- A member stated the need for funding for this in addition to what's in the POP and indicated that their group would advocate for funding.
- A member expressed support for funding the two positions, on assumption that it frees up the district biologists. The member would support housing the non-lethal deterrence plan program in the ODFW.
- A member stated sporting dogs are not treated the same as working dogs in the Plan and instead is makes no mention of sporting dogs. We use hounds regularly to control predators and puts the hounds at risk. In management phase, dog owners should be allowed to defend their sporting dogs in the face of wolves.
  - ODFW responded noting the place to have this conversation would be to include sporting dogs in statute (ORS 610.150).

Shannon clarified that the conflict deterrence plans framework is not ODFW's proposal. ODFW does not plan to present on it at the Commission meeting. If ODFW pulls another group together in the future, it may be brought up then but is not proposed language revisions in the Wolf Plan where conflict deterrence plans are mentioned.

Deb noted there may be a misinterpretation or misunderstanding on this issue by the conservation groups as these groups are not present at this meeting. **Next steps may be to clarify to all WPSR members via email that ODFW is not recommending including the conflict deterrence**

plans framework in the Wolf Plan, however, they may pull a group together to discuss it for more development at a future date if there was enthusiastic interest.

#### **4. Discuss and Seek Resolution on WPSR Outcomes**

*ODFW and Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West*

Derek invited member to discuss the next steps to prepare for the Commission meeting.

Kevin presented the next steps in preparing for the March 15 Commission meeting:

- No longer than 49 days prior to the March 15 Commission meeting, ODFW must file a notice of rulemaking and Economic Impact Statement and a current draft of the OARs with the Secretary of State's office.
- ODFW will continue to finalize the proposed 2019 Wolf Plan and OARs after this. The final wildlife division proposal will be an agenda item exhibit on March 15, 2019 before the Commission.
- ODFW will send a meeting packet to Commissioners two weeks before the Commission meeting (March 1), and then on the Monday, March 4, it is published on the website for public review.
- As soon as ODFW files with the SOS, the public comment period is open. People can submit written comments during this time, and ODFW will develop a public correspondence file that is part of the Commission Packet. There will also be a supplemental correspondence file at the meeting. People can also provide oral testimony at the Commission meeting.

Shannon presented how she anticipates the Commission meeting will go. She noted that ODFW will go through their presentation, explain where there is and is not agreement among the WPSR, and provide the ODFW recommendation. Then there will be public testimony. All interested stakeholders will likely attend to provide testimony and to support their groups. The Commission may ask us to consider panel testimony in which groups that align come on a panel together to present their comments. Then the Commission will decide on whether to adopt ODFW's recommendation, stay with the current Plan, or some other decision or modification.

Deb expressed hope that the process has been productive even though several stakeholders chose not to attend the meeting today. A member expressed concern in considering the ODFW proposal when there are so many voices missing from the discussion today. ODFW explained they have taken into consideration and incorporated all stakeholders' input from all meetings into the Wolf Plan. It is important to keep in mind the historic context—the stakeholders and ODFW have had many discussions over the past several years that go beyond the five-meeting WPSR Work Group process.

#### **Closing Reflections:**

Deb asked participants and ODFW staff for their final reflection on the process, and individuals provided their reflections in turn.

*Stakeholder Final Reflections:*

- Through this process, I gained a better perspective of everyone's perspectives. As representing people who are the most directly impacted by increasing wolf populations, it is disappointing to see the advocacy groups walk away, however, we still have to provide feedback and try to seek understanding. As we move to Commission process, we will be candid about the significant burden on the livestock community. It would be great to increase social tolerance of wolves on the landscape. We will never endorse activities that are less than tolerable; but people need to know they have an option to protect their livelihood. I hope the walk away from the table doesn't change that.
- Social acceptance by producers seems unlikely and it seems unlikely to co-exist in a harmonious way. But it is good to have educational components to provide a better understanding of wolves. It is unfortunate that the other groups did not want to participate today. Wolf populations will continue to grow, and we need to look forward to management phase. I appreciate that the recommendations are making a move toward being less restrictive, which is the right direction.
- Our objective was to come up with a revised plan that is adaptive and flexible, and we got a good start. The Plan is flexible and is a good product. The 2010 Plan was looking forward to the time when wolves would come to Oregon, as opposed to a time when wolves are present. It is time to revise the Plan. The proposals made by staff are adequate for our needs and interests. Looking at other states that have more experience with wolves is useful in developing an Oregon Wolf Plan based on those lessons learned.
- I concur with what's been said by other members. I feel comfortable putting the Plan back in hands of staff to make final recommendations. I have faith in Commission to make a solid decision based on the recommendation. I disagreed with statement by conservation groups that ODFW was deviating from being responsible in their management of wolves from a conservation perspective. Everything here is grounded in science, and it is solid conservation.

*Governor's Office Final Reflections:*

- Amira thanked members for their participation and expressed that the Governor appreciates the participation too. Members have transparently expressed their points of view. She appreciates ODFW's staff time and effort, trying to move the proposal forward, and trying to be as understanding to stakeholders as they could be. This proposal is in the Commission's hands, and she believes they will make a good decision. Amira mentioned the Governor is paying close attention to this issue. Amira is taking everything she has learned throughout this process to her and looks forward to hearing her thoughts. Amira concluded by thanking Deb as well.

*ODFW Staff Final Reflections:*

- Thanks to everyone for their participation: members and audience. We have been revising the Wolf Plan for a long time, and all of the input is valuable. It is great that all stakeholders were candid, because if we are going to write the best Plan, we need to know what stakeholders think, so we can put together best compromise we can find.
- It has been a great process to try to get enough comments and ideas to generate into a plan that reflects alignment. There is a challenge in that even when there is no consensus, ODFW still has to come up with a recommendation that it hopes best aligns with conservation and management of wolves and stakeholder needs.

- I appreciate everyone's involvement. Many of you have been involved for a long time and WPSR was not starting from scratch. We went over the most contentious issues in the WPSR Work Group. The products have to be understood in the context of where we started; and indeed, there was progress made. The convening interview process was interesting and appreciate the honesty. I'm more confident now in putting the Plan together, because I was getting honest answers from stakeholders.

## **5. Opportunity for Public Input** *Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West*

Deb opened the floor for public input. Seven members of the public provided input. Their input is summarized below.

Steve Kinzer: Steve expressed disappointment at the decision by stakeholders to not attend. The conservation community has not shown compromise, whereas the stakeholders representing cattle owners who are most impacted, have compromised. The 2010-2015 ODFW Report is phenomenal. The ranchers listened and we now have a phenomenal Plan. Encourage ODFW to listen to those stakeholders who have skin in the game.

Tim Barbouletos, fifth generation Oregonian: Tim commented that the definition of chronic depredation uses the term "grazing season." What does that mean, and could you stick to a time duration instead? A season may be different depending on location. Expressed disappointment that all stakeholders were not able to develop a unified plan to present to the Commission. There is a better opportunity to get what you need as part of a unified group.

Harry Barber, timberland owner: Harry acknowledged the collaborative process based on science and input from biologists, and it has deteriorated into two opposing sides, and will probably lead to divisive, emotion-based behavior by all stakeholders. There are bears, coyotes and lions on my property that have decimated deer populations and caused lots of damage. Drawing parallels, I hope you can reach a target goal for wolves in specific areas of the state, and manage to that, and not let it explode like the cougar population has.

Haley Stewart, Humane Society: Haley stated the Human Society's biggest interest is seeing a Wolf Plan that reflects killing wolves as an option of last resort. The chronic depredation standard is too low of a threshold for us to be comfortable with and does not give enough time to demonstrate the effectiveness of non-lethal methods. It is not clear whether we are sticking with a 9-month timeframe or a grazing season. We are opposed to using hunters or trappers for controlled hunts; not a sound management tool, and majority of Oregonians do not support it. Also, it is not clear whether hunters and trappers can keep the wolves after the hunt. We would want clarification on whether they can keep the wolves, we would oppose them being able to keep the wolf.

Joan Beldin, citizen: Joan stated she has followed this issue for a long time and has lots of disappointment. Wolves are seen as the problem child. They have value and should be treated with more respect. They can increase health of ungulate herds, they are good natural defense against some disease. I am disappointed with the low chronic depredation standard, 2 is not chronic. I am against having private citizens kill wolves and against them keeping the wolf they have trapped, which is a trophy hunt. Trophy hunting is the lowest kind of hunting.

James Dundan, Oregon resident and hunter and angler, member of OHA, RMEF and Ducks Unlimited: James has been following the process. It is obvious that the Wolf Plan is working. Wolves are increasing in numbers and farther in range faster than anyone anticipated. I feel strongly that general hunting population should be allowed to participate in controlled hunts. In Oregon, we have controlled hunts for other big game species; it is very highly regulated. Within the controlled hunt program, if you want to hunt geese you have to take a class and pass a test. Same for other species. It makes sense and doesn't take a special agent. General public should be able to harvest wolves. ODFW is funded by hunters and anglers. Cattlemen and small timber holders are the ones managing the habitat for wildlife. Wildlife is all about habitat; they have the skin in the game and pay the price for wolves.

Leland Brown, Wildlife Society Oregon Chapter: Leland stated the Wildlife Society Oregon Chapter supports the recovery and restoration of wolf populations. The current Plan has been doing a good job of that. We expect to continue to support ODFW's efforts and the management Plan. I appreciate the stakeholder engagement.

**6. Next Steps and Summary**  
***Deb Nudelman, Kearns & West***

Deb confirmed the next steps:

- ODFW will complete tasks to prepare for and present at the March 15 Commission meeting.
- Kearns & West and ODFW will develop a draft meeting summary.
- Look to the website for a final draft. We will post meeting materials to the website in the next couple of days.
- Kearns & West will present a final report on the process as part of the Commission packet.

Shannon provided closing reflections and spoke to the audience. Shannon expressed appreciation for everyone's participation, of both those who have followed the process for a long time and those who are new. In Oregon, wolves are the most contentious wildlife subject. I'm willing to continue to work on issues with you, if it is in the best interest of wildlife management, sustainable wolf population, and reduced conflict. Big thanks to Kearns & West; you have fought to keep the process going, and it is gratifying to hear from everyone here that they did get something from the process. And big thanks to Governor's Office, and Amira's willingness to ask the tough questions and be a link to the Governor's office. Oregon is committed to a sustainable wolf population.

Meeting adjourned 1:57pm

At the Feb 8th Commission meeting in Portland, Chair Finley announced that the adoption of a revised Wolf Plan scheduled for March 15 would be postponed to a future meeting, to allow everyone more time to review the Plan and Commissioners more time to talk with constituents. ODFW staff intend to make a draft Plan available for review by early March.

Upcoming Meeting Dates	Location
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None Scheduled</li> </ul>	

## Meeting Participation

### WPSR Work Group Representatives

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization/Entity</b>
Jim Akenson	Oregon Hunters Association
Mary Anne Cooper	Oregon Farm Bureau
Rodger Huffman	Oregon Cattlemen's Association
David Wiley	Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

### ODFW Team

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
Kevin Blakely	Wildlife Division Deputy Administrator
Derek Broman	Carnivore/Furbearer Program Coordinator
Doug Cottam	Wildlife Division Administrator
Shannon Hurn	Deputy Director for Fish and Wildlife Programs
Curt Melcher	Director

### Governor's Office

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
Amira Streeter	Natural Resources Policy Advisor

### Team Members and Audience

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization/Entity</b>
Bryn Hudson	Governor's Natural Resource Office
Gregory Wolley	ODFW Commissioner
Steve Kinzer	Member of the Public
Tim Barbouletos	Member of the Public
Harry Barber	Timberland owner
Haley Stewart	Humane Society
Joan Beldin	Member of the Public
James Dundan	Member of OHA, RMEF, and Ducks Unlimited
Leland Brown	Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society
Stephanie Christenson	Member of the Public
Sheila Redman	Member of the Public
David Williams	Member of the Public
Rebecca White	Pacific Wolf Coalition
Tom Hilken	USFS
Tony Schick	OPB
Jerome Rosa	Oregon Cattlemen's Association
Jane Schwitzer	Member of the Public
Fred Walasavage	Oregon Hunter's Association

George Plaven	Capital Press
Diane Gallegos	Wolf Haven International
Meghan Martin	Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society

## Attachments

1. Email to WPSR Working Group from Cascadia Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, and Oregon Wild – *dated January 4, 2019*
2. Email to Governor Brown from Cascadia Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, and Oregon – *dated January 4, 2019*

**From:** Sean Stevens <ss@oregonwild.org>

**Sent:** Friday, January 4, 2019 4:55 PM

**To:** Sylvia Ciborowski <sciborowski@kearnswest.com>

**Subject:** Re: MEETING MATERIALS: 1/8/19 Meeting - WPSR Work Group

Dear WPSR Working Group,

Our organizations have greatly appreciated the opportunity to participate in the meetings to revise Oregon's Wolf Management and Conservation Plan. We also value the time and effort that has gone into this process by the Kearns & West team. Unfortunately, given our strong concerns about ODFW's control over the process and their proposed resolution of our discussions, we do not feel it will be beneficial for our groups to attend this next meeting.

We initially engaged in this collaborative process to take a step back from the wolf plan that was proffered by ODFW previously, a plan that was unanimously opposed by stakeholders on all sides. Our goal was to arrive at a wolf plan that focused on wolf conservation and could be supported by the conservation community and the majority of Oregonians who support wolf recovery; the consensus goal was a plan that resulted in fewer dead wolves and fewer conflicts between wolves and livestock.

We believe that a sound stakeholder process – one that provides neutral oversight and guidance while encouraging meaningful discussion and collaborative brainstorming – would have provided an opportunity for a better outcome. Unfortunately, ODFW undermined this opportunity by rigidly controlling the process and leading us to a seemingly predetermined outcome while bouncing between participating as a stakeholder and controlling the facilitation process and direction. We made sincere, helpful recommendations to improve the plan by increasing resources for proactive, effective methods to better protect livestock and the state's struggling wolf population. However, it has become abundantly clear that our good faith efforts to propose solutions and explore common ground in the stakeholder process have been for naught. It is not hyperbole to state that every amendment to the plan we have suggested in this process has been rejected by ODFW.

We are disappointed that once again ODFW has proposed revisions that reject science and will impede wolf recovery. On all fronts, this new plan degrades proactive measures that support wolf conservation. Despite excellent facilitation by the Kearns & West team, ODFW retained control over the process – participating neither as a full stakeholder nor as a truly neutral observer. This has tainted the process and once again resulted in an untenable proposal with potentially dire implications for wolves. The agency weighed in when convenient, rejected constructive proposals, and repeatedly put its finger on the scale and ruined the possibility for real consensus.

We want to proceed in good faith negotiations around Oregon's wolf plan and still believe that we can reach a place of agreement. However, ODFW's position as participant, facilitator and arbitrator has failed the collaboration because they are an interested party in these negotiations. The unfortunate result of this position has been the advancement of a biased selection of proposals that minimize proactive conservation work by ODFW and increase the situations under which wolves can be killed. This is an untenable result for our organizations and a disappointment for Oregon.

Sincerely,

Cascadia Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, and Oregon Wild



January 4, 2019

Governor Kate Brown Office of the Governor  
900 Court Street NE, Suite 254  
Salem, OR 97301-4047

**Re: Wolf Plan Stakeholder Process**

CC: Nik Blosser, Jason Miner, Amira Streeter, Fish and Wildlife Commissioners

Dear Governor Brown,

On behalf of Cascadia Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, and Oregon Wild we are writing to express our opposition to the direction of the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan stakeholder process and draft plan. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's current proposed resolutions to be reflected in the Plan update are not only weaker than previous drafts, but highlight the failure of this flawed stakeholder process to develop a plan that represents the values of Oregonians.

After reviewing ODFW's latest draft, it is clear the agency's intention is to find ways to kill wolves faster, not prioritize conflict prevention through non-lethal measures. Barring a change in direction, our four organizations will be collectively and actively opposing the revised Plan as proposed by ODFW.

We believe that a sound stakeholder process – one that provides neutral oversight and guidance while encouraging meaningful discussion and collaborative brainstorming – would have provided an opportunity for a better outcome. Unfortunately, ODFW undermined this opportunity by rigidly controlling the process and leading us to a seemingly predetermined outcome while bouncing between participating as a stakeholder and controlling the facilitation process and direction. We made sincere recommendations to improve the Plan by increasing resources for proactive, effective methods to better protect livestock and the state's struggling wolf population. However, it has become abundantly clear that our good faith efforts to propose solutions and explore common ground in the stakeholder process have been for naught. Every amendment to the Plan we have suggested in this process has been rejected by ODFW. Therefore, we will be withdrawing from the facilitated stakeholder process.

The Wolf Plan review process began three years ago after ODFW prematurely removed state endangered species protections for wolves. From the outset, ODFW struggled to draft a plan that reflected the public's desire to appropriately balance the positive impacts of continued wolf recovery with mitigating the rare - but real - challenges to some livestock owners. The agency's increasingly controversial and unscientific draft proposals were opposed by all stakeholder groups. About a year ago, your office aided in the initiation of a new process so Oregonians would get the Plan they

deserve - a plan based in science, one that is reflective of Oregon's conservation values, and one that prioritizes using non-lethal measures as a way to reduce conflict. Ultimately, this approach would result in fewer dead livestock, fewer dead wolves, and less human conflict.

As has been the case for more than a decade, we participated in good faith – even while sharing our concern about this problematic ODFW-controlled process. We have been at the table for every stakeholder meeting, testified in front of the Fish and Wildlife Commission at each opportunity, engaged with independent scientists, developed and shared memorandums that detailed our position and recommended revisions, and finally, made serious attempts to negotiate with the other stakeholders and ODFW throughout this facilitated process. Unfortunately, your Department of Fish and Wildlife has again illustrated that they are unwilling to develop a plan that honors your expressed vision and the wishes of the Oregon people. It is evident that ODFW will disregard science under political pressure. Killing wolves should be at most an action of last resort. Sadly, this proposed plan stands as yet another example of the agency putting commercial interests ahead of Oregonians who value native wildlife.

Therefore, we are requesting that you communicate with ODFW leadership to craft a plan that aligns with the best available science and Oregon's values. More specifically, we ask that you communicate to ODFW that the \$1.17 million dollars you have allocated in your 2019-2021 budget for Wolf Plan implementation may not be used for killing wolves. Instead, over the next five years - the expected length of the new Wolf Plan – ODFW must focus on prioritizing meaningful, transparent, enforceable, and effective non-lethal measures and only allow wolves to be killed in active defense of livestock. With those measures in place and to mitigate concerns from the livestock industry, we ask that you direct 50% of the \$1.17 million to reform and drastically increase funds for an existing program that compensates livestock operators to fund non-lethal conflict prevention work and mitigate any potential economic impacts caused by wolves.

Oregonians deserve a science-based plan that leads to less conflict and killing. It wasn't that long ago, Oregon set a standard for the rest of the nation. Under previous provisions, Oregon's wolf population grew while livestock loss, wolf killing, and other conflict dramatically decreased. With your leadership it is an achievable vision. We look to you to get the Plan back on track.

Thank you. We appreciate your consideration of our request. Sincerely,

Nick Cady  
Cascadia Wildlands

Amaroq Weiss  
Center for Biological Diversity

Suzanne Stone  
Defenders of Wildlife

Sean Stevens  
Oregon Wild